

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGV #0080/01 0280816
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 280813Z JAN 10
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0040
INFO RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHINGTON DC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS GENEVA 000080

SIPDIS
STATE FOR IO/HS
EEB, OES
COMMERCE FOR NOAA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [SENV](#) [KGHG](#) [WMO](#) [AORC](#)
SUBJECT: The Global Framework for Climate Services

¶1. SUMMARY: The WMO hosted an intergovernmental meeting in Geneva on January 11-12, 2010, to approve the terms of reference and endorse the composition of a task force of high-level, independent advisors who will conduct consultations and make recommendations on the components of a Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The terms of reference that were adopted direct the task force to produce, within 12 months, a vision of the Global Framework for Climate Services that will "define the roles, responsibilities, and capabilities of the elements within the GFCS and clearly illustrate how it will assist the integration of climate information and services into national planning, policy and programmes." The task force will be composed of sixteen members providing relevant expertise and regional and gender balance. The intergovernmental meeting also decided that governments and relevant organizations may submit their views on the GFCS by April 15 for consideration by the task force. END SUMMARY.

¶2. The U.S. delegation to the meeting included the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environment and Sustainable Development, the Deputy Director of the Climate Program Office at NOAA; and the EST Officer at the US Geneva Mission. The delegation achieved its goals of 1) reaching agreement on concise terms of reference that gives direction to but does not overly prescribe the outcome from the task force, 2) endorsing the composition of the task force without protracted debate, and 3) ensuring that relevant organizations and governments could submit their views on the GFCS for consideration by the task force.

¶3. Background: The US mission hosted a lunch on Monday before our meetings began that enabled us to talk with other governmental representatives with similar ideas for the task force, including Barbados, Indonesia, Canada, Chile, Slovenia and Norway. Canada and Indonesia were eventually asked to chair the drafting group during the meeting to elaborate the terms of reference, so the preparations beforehand were instrumental in creating a solid understanding of USG goals and strategy.

¶4. The intergovernmental meeting opened at 3 pm on January 11th and was chaired by Alexander Bedritsky, current President of WMO, who did a superb job presiding over the plenary and the Committee of the Whole and getting the drafting group set up. Right at the start, the US raised procedural issues with the text. The WMO had sent out an official text, translated into the six UN languages on 6 Jan, but also had held consultations with a sub-set of countries in Geneva who had drafted text that was heavily slanted to developing country concerns and overly-prescriptive of the task force's expected outcomes. This text had been neither widely circulated nor translated into all official languages before the meeting began, so the USDEL requested that member states begin negotiations on the official text. Despite widespread support for this idea, a small group of developing countries insisted upon working from the revised text. After hours of procedural wrangling, consensus was reached to use as a starting point a streamlined text distributed to all WMO members in December 2009. A drafting group was constituted and drafting continued until 11:50 pm.

15. The group reconvened on Tuesday and worked all day to draft the terms of reference for the task force. The US Delegation, with support from many developed and developing countries alike, pushed for simple instructions that gave the task force a mandate to consult broadly with uses and providers of climate information and services. We successfully resisted efforts by a handful of developing countries (including India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Bolivia, Venezuela, Iran and Nigeria) to hamstring the task force with instructions slanted heavily in the direction of developing countries' ideological mantra, which included principles such as recognition of the "common but differentiated responsibility" of developed and developing countries, other links to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, limits to data sharing, and requirements for financial and technological assistance. At about 8pm, terms of reference finally were adopted. These were consistent with U.S. interests, incorporating some benign principles such as the need for broad consultation and the important role of governments, but none of the more problematic references.

16. When the plenary was reconvened, Nigeria and Egypt, supported by others in their group, initially refused to agree to terms of reference that did not have principles clearly elaborated. In a mini-replay of Copenhagen, we nearly ended up at 10 p.m. on Tuesday only able to "take note" of the work of the intergovernmental meeting or, worse, to reconvene at a later date to complete the work. The situation was salvaged when Mauritius, as head of the African Group, asked for a break and brokered a deal with the two aforementioned countries to accept a suggestion from Chairman Bedtrisky to allow a section of the terms of reference to be

titled: General Principles and Scope of Work. Thereafter, the task force composition was endorsed quickly, as was a suggestion from Chairman Bedritsky to note the input from India, Bangladesh and others in the meeting report, and a request from the US that any additional input from other countries and relevant organizations be solicited and considered by the task force. Any such submissions are due by 15 April 2010.

17. Next steps: USG should plan to submit views on the substance of the GFCS by April 15.

18. Comment: This meeting, the WCC-3 itself, and the WMO Extraordinary session of the WMO EC Working group on Climate and Related Weather, Water and Environmental Matters in October, have helped establish a strong and supportive working relationship between the US and most other WMO members on climate issues. The US worked closely with Permanent Representatives (and their designates) from Germany, France and almost all of the major developed countries, as well as with Caribbean and other island countries and, perhaps most notably, African states. This working relationship will no doubt help with climate issues addressed under the WMO in the future and specifically for work on the GFCS that will continue at the WMO Congress and beyond. End Comment.
GRIFFITHS